

THE

HISTORIAN

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OF HANCOCK COUNTY

Bay Saint Louis, Mississippi

March 1999

MARCH HAPPENINGS

It is pilgrimage time again. We will not hold our regular monthly meeting this month because it falls Thursday, March 18, the opening day of the 52nd annual Spring Pilgrimage of homes, gardens and historic landmarks. It is sponsored by the Gulf Coast Council of Garden Clubs. Historical Society president, Charles Gray, will be speaking at 9:00 a.m. in the Courtroom on the second floor of the Courthouse. His subject will be the "The Gulf Coast Tercentenary."

At 10:00 a.m., Fred Wagner, prominent local architect will discuss the "Architecture of Bay Saint Louis."

The remaining seminars deal with gardening topics including at 3:00 p.m. Kim Kriner, horticulturist for *Beauvoir* will be speaking about "Victorian Gardens".

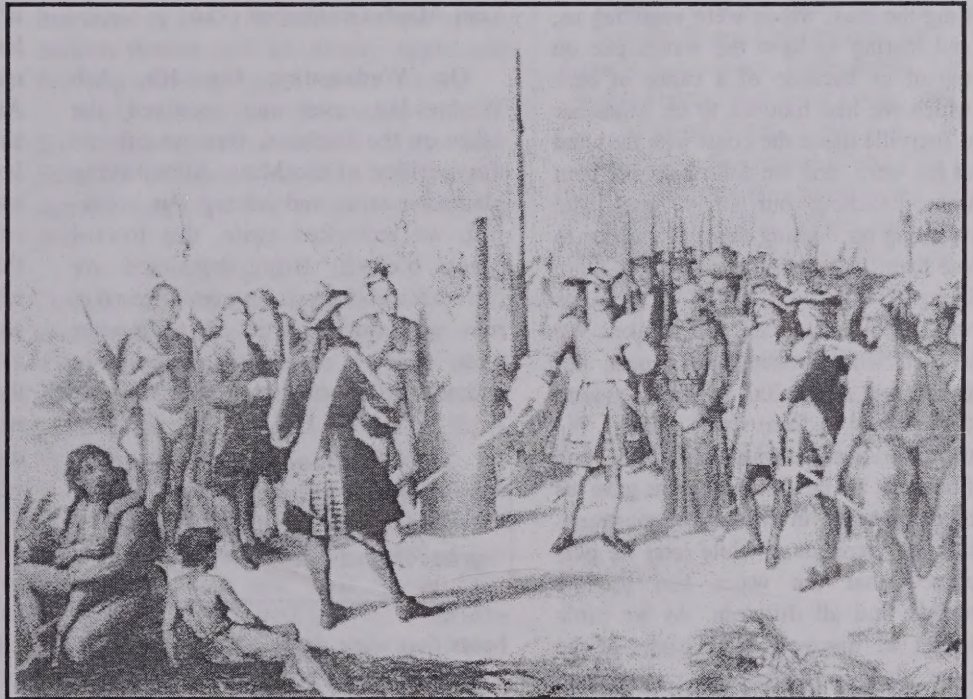
At the Depot there will be a wildlife and wildflower photography exhibit by Yvonne Griffin, a well known nature photographer. The Bay-Waveland Garden Club Flower Show will be held at the Main Street Methodist Church from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

All Pilgrimage events are free and open to the public.

President Gray addresses Louisiana Historical Society

Hancock County Historical Society President, Charles Gray was guest speaker for the Louisiana Historical Society in New Orleans on Tuesday, March 9th. The meeting was held at the Round Table Club on Saint Charles Avenue.

Mr. Gray's subject was "The first 300 years of Gulf Coast History."



René Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle at the mouth of the Mississippi in 1682
Iberville was searching for this sight in 1699

The Voyage of Le Marin Part three of a 1999 Series

The Historian continues its selections from the 1699 ship's log of *Le Marin*, in observance of the 300th anniversary of the founding of Bay St. Louis.

In February we followed d'Iberville's squadron of ships as it landed on Ship Island, came ashore on the Coast at what are today Biloxi and Ocean Springs then continued westward to explore the Mississippi River.

In March the squadron entered the mouth of the Mississippi, searching for deep water channels. We join them as

they enter a pass between two islets where "soil even shakes under foot when one drops something heavy on the ground."

Edith Back

On Monday the 2nd of March, around six in the morning, we set sails on a north wind of fair strength. We coursed in zig-zag fashion, between southwest and south-southeast, to escape from the labyrinth of islets that surrounded us. After rounding a point, where we had to heave astern, we sighted the mainland running south to southeast, we ranged along its shore all

the way; the seas were so high that we had to spread out the faignes, which are made of tam impregnated canvas about a foot wide, along our rails to keep the seas from shipping aboard. We put to for a while so as to bring to nearer land, also in fear of our going beyond the river. We saw the shore line still running south-southeast and straight southeast; we held closer to the wind, using our reefs and our mainsail, trying to come up to the coast, the winds were blowing hard in that direction. After having spent more than two hours battling the seas, which were engulfing us, and fearing to have the waters pile on top of us because of a canoe of bark which we had moored to us, Monsieur d'Iberville made the coast with the wind at his stern, and we followed him, bent upon beaching our small boats, and counting on floating them again later to use them to return to our vessels, there being no other way for us, as the lands were all inundated and full of lakes. We sighted what looked like a pass, between two small bits of rising ground that seemed to form small islands. We took aboard some water and tasted it, on finding it to be fresh water it gave us much pleasure, in the state of consternation we were in. A while later we perceived that the water had become muddy and all different. As we came nearer we discovered the passes of the river, they were three in number, and through them there ran a current so strong that we could scarcely make any headway, although we had a strong wind with us. We sailed between these land rises. We sighted in the middle of the pass a breaker against which we feared we were going to wreck ourselves having had great trouble in rounding it because of our having sighted it too late. This breaker lies northeast to southwest of the land rises which are the farthest into the river on the larboard side, when coming in. The entrance to this river runs in a position southeast to west northwest, and may be about four leagues wide at the mouth, the shores run along the same rhumb of the wind and are made up of two tongues [langues] of land, within range of a boucanier from each other, so that it

is possible for one to sight the sea from both the shores of this river; it itself runs along the coast and this is the reason for its shores being both so inundated...

On Tuesday the 3rd, toward seven in the morning, the services of the mass were held and we chanted a Te Deum to celebrate our acquaintance with the river Mississippi....We covered eight leagues, the sail being of great help to us. [d'Iberville's account states that they put into a small side stream which he named, because it was Tuesday before Lent, Mardi Gras bayou.]

On Wednesday, the 4th, Ash Wednesday, everyone received the ashes on the forehead, then we offered the sacrifice of the Mass. After having planted a cross and having our breakfast, we embarked again, this toward seven o'clock. Being becalmed we rowed for about two leagues. The river runs up toward northwest to quarter west, then to northwest-quarter-north, and to north-northwest. We saw some

They rubbed their hands over our bellies and wrapped their arms around us, signs of great friendship.

boats that were made up of some three sections of cane bundled together, with small pieces of wood tied across the tops and bottoms, they tapered to a point at the ends so that they might navigate easier. The savages use these boats when they go hunting to cross streams from one side to the other. Around six in the afternoon we made for land, and put ashore for the night.

On Friday the 6th, we distributed two corbillons [small baskets] of bread, and some pap, amongst twenty-six men; we then fired a shot from one of the pierriers. Around seven o'clock we embarked again, in a fog so thick that we could hardly see in front of us. The river continues to course in directions northwest and northwest-quarter west, at a distance about twenty-seven leagues from its mouth, then it follows a serpen-

tine course from northwest to east, and then east northeast to northwest. At sunset we landed again and erected some shelters for the night. We had one of our men climb a tree to see if he could discover anything. He could not. Two of our men who had been exploring around in the bark-canoe reported having seen three crocodile, one being of prodigious size. Toward seven in the evening, we killed a buffalo; we are now thirty leagues from the mouth of the river.

On Saturday, the 7th, toward seven in the morning, we returned aboard after having planted a cross and carved our markings on trees, weather flat calm. Around nine o'clock, while ranging along shore, we saw three buffaloes relaxed near the water. We landed five of our men to follow their trails, this they could not do as they soon lost sight of them among the woods and the reeds. A while later, while rounding a point, we sighted a canoe with two savages about to land ashore; as soon as they saw us they fled; within rifle range, in some woods farther up, we saw five more who did likewise with the exception of one who waited for us at the river's edge. We spoke to him through sign language. Monsieur d'Iberville gave him a knife, some glass-beads and other knick-knacks; he gave us some smoked buffalo and bear meats in exchange. Monsieur d'Iberville had all of our men embark back on the biscayennes, for fear of intimidating them, and made the lone savage understand that we wanted him to call his companions over, which he did, singing out their chant of peace. A while later they all came toward us doing likewise, their arms upraised towards the sun and rubbing their bellies over, both being tokens of their admiration and of their joy; when they got very near us they rubbed their hands over our bellies and wrapped their arms around us, both being signs of great friendship on their part....Monsieur d'Iberville gave them some glass beads, some knives and some small mirrors; they gave him in exchange some of the smoked buffalo and bear meats they had with them in their canoes. Our men themselves, trafficked for some more,

trading other knick-knacks. A fine old man spread out his meat, lot by lot, side by side of each other, like they do in Europe, and sat alongside waiting.

Two of our men made for him, each giving him a knife and taking way all the meat. There must have been a hundred pounds of it, but the three of them all seemed very well satisfied.

On Monday the 9th, the currents continued to be as swift as on the proceeding day, this compelled us to cross the river three times to get around the points, the river following a serpentine course from north to south by west. At sunset we settled ashore. We had traveled five leagues, and were forty-four leagues from the river's mouth.

On Friday the 13th, around seven in the morning, we embarked again. The river has many turns; toward five o'clock in the evening we came up to two canoes loaded with millet. We pulled alongside; Monsieur d'Iberville gave the savages some glass beads,

The currents continued to be swift, compelling us to cross the river three times to get around the points.

some knives and other things, in exchange for their millet, they seemed well satisfied. One was from the Natchez nation and the other from the Byagoulas, they were returning to their village that same afternoon. We assembled together an iron grinding-mill, that we had taken with us to grind the Indian wheat. Having eaten all of the barrel of flour, with which we had made some pap, and having very little bread left, we set about to prepare some sagamite, which consists of a mixture of Indian wheat, ground or merely crushed, boiled in water with a bit of melted lard fat added for seasoning, we had no other means of subsistence, outside of our drinking water, the eau-de-vie [brandy] being all gone.

From *A Chapter From Memoirs & Documents* by Pierre Margry. Translated by Henry de ville du Sinclair.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Saint Stanislaus graduating class of 1949 met at the Lobrano House on March 5th to celebrate their 50th anniversary.

We were delighted to have them and we had a very special (selfish) motive: many of them have pictures! Old pictures. Picture that we can copy and add to our archives. To those who attended and promised us copies of your photos, please remember and bring or send them to us.

Mildred Fossier brought me several picture postcards of local scenes, mostly of the hurricane of 1947. Mildred was one of our earliest donors and we deeply appreciate her long-standing support of our society.

Emily deMontluzin donated a copy of the 50th anniversary booklet of the Bay Saint Louis Rotary Club 1925 - 1975 which details many civic and social events of the era.

The Friendship Oak chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution will meet at the Lobrano House on March 13 for a luncheon hosted by Charles Gray. Afterward, the group will dedicate a marker at the grave of Susie Wilkins Walker.

The order form for bricks to be used in the Tercentenary Park surrounds for the statue of Bienville is still included in this newsletter. We met with Kevin Fitzpatrick, the design architect, on Thursday last and are very pleased with the design for the pedestal. It will be constructed of granite, approximately four feet square and five feet tall. It will contain a safe designed to protect its contents for one hundred years until it is opened on August 25, 2099. It is likely that there will be those among us who will attend both the locking of the safe this August 25 and its opening in 2099.

Among other items to be included in the time capsule, we are accepting business cards or social cards of like-size from Hancock County residents. You may pen a message on the reverse side if you wish.

Charles H. Gray

Tercentenary: n. (1855) a 300th anniversary or its celebration. Tercentennial, adj or n (1872). Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary - Merriam Webster

NEW MEMBERS

The Historical Society is pleased to announce the following new member for the month of March. Our membership is now more than 700.

Dot Hamann, Bay Saint Louis, MS
 Tony Monroe, Stow, MA
 Mrs. Tony Monroe, Stow, MA
 Dale St. Amant, Bay St. Louis, MS
 Jean Jaumot, Diamondhead, MS
 James Brieger, Richland, MS
 Dorothy Brieger, Richland, MS
 Preston Jones, Collegedale, TN
 Connie Koch Jones, Collegedale, TN
 Rubie Harris, Bay Saint Louis, MS
 Michael Sevin, Violet, LA
 Joann Powell, Diamondhead, MS
 Sherrye Webster, Bay Saint Louis, MS
 Kevin Webster, Bay Saint Louis, MS
 William Wicht, Jr., Hattiesburg, MS
 Jane Valentine, Laurel, MS

LOBRANO HOUSE HOURS

MONDAY	8 a.m.
through	to
FRIDAY	4 p.m.

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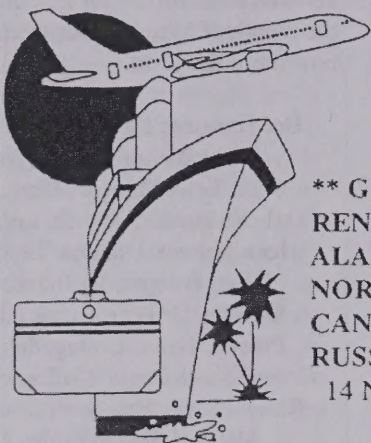
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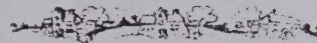
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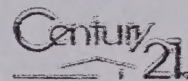
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
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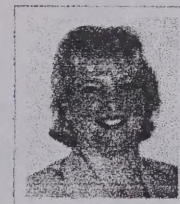
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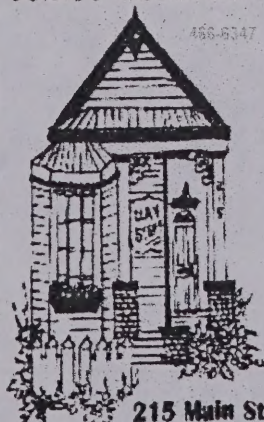
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